GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2537
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2002
HEPATITIS - B
PRABHUNATH SINGH;SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether millions of people are suffering from virus of Hepatitis-B and many of them have developed serious liver problem;

(b) if so, the measures taken by the Government to check the spread of the virus;

(c) whether the prices of Hepatitis-B vaccine have been cut almost to its half;

(d) if so, the Government propose to introduce this vaccine in the Government hospitals free-of-cost particularly to CGHS beneficiaries;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a)&(b): Though exact figures are not available, it is estimated by the WHO that Hepatitis-B virus chronically infects approximately 4% of the population. Government has taken the following steps to prevent the spread of Hepatitis-B:-

- Central Government hospital personnel at high risk are being immunized against Hepatitis-B. State Governments have also been advised to take similar steps;
- Guidelines have been issued for mandatory testing of blood in all blood banks;
- Promotion of safe sex under National AIDS Control Programme;
- Health Awareness campaigns regarding the danger of using unsterile syringes and needles under national AIDS Control Programme; and
- Guidelines have been issued to State authorities for use of separate sterile syringes and needles for each injection.

(c): The Governemnt does not fix the price of Hepatitis-B vaccine.

(d)to(f): Hepatitis-B Vaccine is provided to CGHS beneficiaries on prescription of theHead of Department of any Government Hospital in cases where there is danger of exposure to Hepatitis-B.